

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 4 were pending in the present application. The present Amendment adds new claims 5 and 6. Thus, upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1 and 4-6 will be pending.

The specification has been objected to for the failure to provide antecedent basis for the term "attached directly" in claim 1. Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, on similar grounds. Applicant respectfully submits that the present amendment to claim 1 sufficiently addresses this concern, and requests that the objection to the specification and the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 4 under §112 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,278,967, to Hagerman ("Hagerman") in view of United States Patent No. 4,501,783, to Hiragami et al. ("Hiragami"), and further in view of United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0111406 to Kwak et al. ("Kwak"), as evidenced by the Kirk article attached to the Office Action. Claim 1 is independent. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claim 1 recites a spread mat. The spread mat comprises, *inter alia*, a porous mat body containing stacked and looped resin filaments, the porous mat body having a front surface, and the resin filaments having front portions in the front surface. The spread mat further comprises an adhesive agent spray-formed on the front surface of the porous mat body, and crushed particulate material attached to the front surface of the porous mat body through the adhesive agent. The crushed particulate material includes particles attached to the front portions of the filaments through the adhesive agent, wherein the particles are of from 15 to 80 meshes.

Hagerman is directed to fibrous doormats formed from curled animal hair (col. 1,

I. 54-55). A mat is formed with this animal hair, and an adhesive is applied, so that the hair filaments are bound together (col. 1, I. 63-69). Hagerman discloses a double-coating system, i.e. adhesive coating 10, and non-slip coating 12, which contains particles 11 (col. 2, I. 52-55).

The Office Action acknowledges that Hagerman fails to disclose or suggest particles of from 15 to 80 meshes, as required in claim 1. To cure this deficiency, the Office Action looks to Hiragami, which discloses particles from 100 microns to 1 mm in particle size, which the Office Action converts to 15-150 mesh. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that Hagerman and Hiragami cannot be combined in the way espoused by the Office Action, and the Office Action has therefore failed to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

As stated in MPEP §2143.01(V), the proposed modification of a primary reference with one or more additional references can not render the primary reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. To modify Hagerman with the teachings of Hiragami would do just that. Hagerman states that the particles must have a mesh size of from 180 to 360. This is an exclusive size range, and is critical to the disclosure. To have any more or less would provide insufficient grip for the mat on the surface which it is placed, and/or cause excessive scratching of polished surfaces (col. 3, I. 4-28). Since the particle sizes disclosed in Hiragami fall outside this range, they would be unsatisfactory for use in the mat of Hagerman. Thus, the mat created by the combination of Hagerman and Hiragami in the Office Action would be unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, since the particle sizes would be too small. There would be insufficient surface grip, and/or the mat would scratch a polished surface. One of ordinary skill in the art would have no reason to combine Hagerman and Hiragami for at least this reason.

Kwak and the Kirk article fail to cure the above-described deficiencies of Hagerman and Hiragami to disclose or suggest the spread mat of claim 1, and are not relied on by the Office Action to do so. Kwak is merely relied on for an aliphatic

polyester for plasticizing PVC. The Kirk article is relied on for a formula to convert mesh values to particle size. Even assuming, *arguendo*, that all of these references teach what they are relied on for, none of them fail to cure the above-described deficiencies of Hagerman to disclose or suggest the spread mat of claim 1.

Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of Hagerman, in view of Hiragami, in further view of Kwak, as evidenced by the Kirk article, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as are claims 2 and 4-6, which depend therefrom. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Such action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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